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2007-2008**

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Police Chief (retired)

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Lenawee County Sheriff  
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County Prosecutor  
Martin Underhill, Grand  
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County Sheriff

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Kathy "K.P." Pelleran,  
State Director  
Donna Aberlich,  
Deputy Director



HUNDREDS OF POLICE CHIEFS,  
SHERIFFS, PROSECUTORS, OTHER LAW  
ENFORCEMENT LEADERS, AND  
VIOLENCE SURVIVORS PREVENTING  
CRIME AND VIOLENCE

**Testimony on H.R. 40 – Urging Congress to Invest in Head Start/Child Care by  
K.P. Pelleran, State Director, FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN, March 20, 2007.**

No one cares more about putting dangerous criminals behind bars than the more than 3,500 law enforcement leaders and victims of violence who are members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, including more than 400 members in Michigan. But law enforcement leaders know from experience that intervening early in a child's life is the best way to prevent crime. When children don't get the right start in life, we're all at risk.

There is no longer any doubt about the value of high-quality preschool programs. Recent long-term studies show that at-risk children who attend high-quality preschool and educational child care programs are far less likely to become criminals than those denied access to such programs.

Poor quality early care multiplies the risk that children will grow up to become criminals and threatens the safety of all Michiganders. Children from low-income families are most at risk of becoming involved in crime without high-quality programs. Unfortunately, low-income families have the most trouble obtaining high-quality care, and are the families whose children would benefit the most from it.

Eligibility for child day care support for working families, five years ago, was at 200 percent of the federal poverty. Since then, the eligibility was made more stringent and is now at 150 percent of poverty. Moreover, there has been no increase in the reimbursement rate for more than six years and provides only a supplement to the actual cost of care.

Today, 78 percent of 3-year-olds and 35 percent of 4-year-olds eligible for state and/or federal preschool do not receive publicly funding preschool services due to a lack of funding. With tuition at private preschool programs and high-quality child day care exceeding the cost of tuition at a public university, the shortage of government supported programs forces many low- and moderate-income working families to resort to child care that often amounts to little more than child storage. Though the state has taken a crucial first step in meeting the need by implementing the Michigan School Readiness Program for 4-year-olds, many children will remain unserved if state and federal funding are not increased.

Research here in Michigan and elsewhere shows that it is possible to give all kids a fair shot at success in school and in life. An investment in high-quality early childhood education and care now will save taxpayers money in future crime costs and help lead children to become productive citizens who add to the tax base rather than the tax burden.

That is why we support House Resolution 40 to urge Congress to invest in Head Start and child day care.

Thank you.





State Rep. Rick Shaffer (left) (R-Three Rivers) and Sturgis Director of Public Safety David Northrop give a box of educational supplies to Christine Sheteron and the kids attending Christine's Day Care Center in Centreville.

## Crime Fighter Awards Presented

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN held events around the state to promote the benefits of crime prevention programs and to thank lawmakers who supported them.

A "Community Conversation" was held at the Michigan Works Service Center in Alpena in cooperation with the Northeast Michigan Community Action Agency. Community leaders, local elected officials and law enforcement leaders participated. Sen.

Tony Stamas (R-Midland) and Rep. Matt Gillard (D-Alpena) were presented Crime Fighter Awards for supporting increased investments in child abuse and neglect prevention, preschool and after-school programs.

Alpena County Prosecutor **Dennis Grenkowicz**, Alcona County Sheriff **Douglas Ellinger** and Alpena County Sheriff **Steve Kieliszewski**

*see Events, page MI 2*

## Members Help Win Increase Of \$15 Million

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN members played an important role in securing \$15 million in new funds for children's programs proven to prevent crime and violence.

Members participated in meetings with lawmakers across the state and in Lansing to promote the benefits of public investments in child abuse and neglect prevention, high quality preschool and high quality after-school programs.

The meetings included "Community Conversations" and other events with lawmakers and local leaders in Cassopolis, Saginaw, Alpena, Centreville, Rockford, Grand Rapids, Detroit, Burton, Lansing, Spring Lake, Grand Haven and Allendale. Allied organizations and individuals participated in many of the sessions.

The new investments approved by the Legislature include \$5 million for vision and hearing screening, \$1.5 million for child abuse and neglect prevention, \$6 million for state-funded preschool, \$1 million for Great Start Collaboratives, and \$1.7 million for

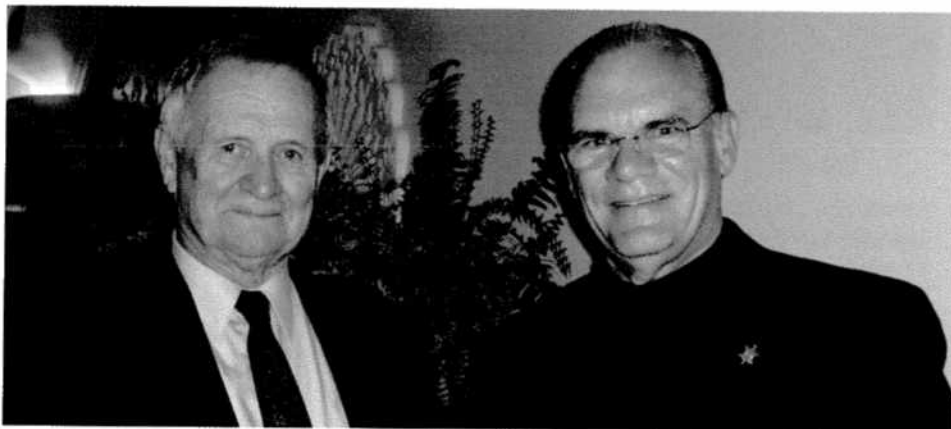
*see Funds, page MI 2*

## Wriggelsworth Honored At Sheriffs' Conference

Ingham County Sheriff **Gene Wriggelsworth** was honored by FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN at the Fall Training Conference of the Michigan Sheriffs' Association. He was recognized for his successful effort to inform state leaders about the benefits of increasing investments in early child care and school readiness programs that reduce crime.

Presenting the 2006 Crime Fighter Award to Wriggelsworth, Clinton County Sheriff **Wayne Kangas**, co-

*see Wriggelsworth, page MI 2*



FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN Co-Chair Clinton County Sheriff Wayne Kangas (left) presents a 2006 Crime Fighter Award to Ingham County Sheriff Gene Wriggelsworth. He was recognized for his efforts to increase state investments in early child care and school readiness.

## Events

*continued from page MI 1*

congratulated the lawmakers on their efforts.

A meeting with local education leaders and law enforcement members was held in Rockford. Cedar Springs Police Chief **Roger Gren** and Rockford Police Chief **David Jones** presented a Crime Fighter Award to Rep. Tom Pearce (R-Rockford) for his support of early childhood education and care, high quality after-school and programs to get troubled kids back on track.

"Crime Prevention and Intervention Day in St. Joseph County" was held at the Centreville Elementary School. Sen. Cameron Brown (R-Sturgis) and Rep. Rick Shaffer (R-Three Rivers) were thanked for their support of increased public investments in early childhood programs.

## Funds

*continued from page MI 1*

parent involvement grants.

"We know that these high-quality programs will help children and families succeed and prevent kids from ever entering the justice system," said State Director K.P. Pelleran.



### Promoting Home Visits

**Former Wyoming Chief of Police Ed Edwardson (right) thanks U.S. Rep. Vernon Ehlers (R-Mich.) for co-sponsoring the Education Begins at Home Act. The measure would provide states with funds for in-home parent coaching that has been proven to reduce child abuse and neglect. FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS Vice President Miriam Rollin and State Director K.P. Pelleran participated in the meeting.**



**State Sen. Tony Stamas (R-Midland) (second from the right) and State Rep. Matt Gillard (D-Alpena) (second from the left) receive Crime Fighter Awards for their work to increase funding for child abuse and neglect prevention, high-quality preschool, and after-school programs. Presenting the awards were (left to right) Alpena County Sheriff Steve Kieliszewski, Alpena County Prosecutor Dennis Grenkowitz, and Alpena County Sheriff Douglas Ellinger.**



**State Rep. Tom Pearce (R-Rockford) (right) was presented a Crime Fighter Award by Cedar Springs Police Chief Roger Gren (left) and Rockford Police Chief David Jones. He was recognized for his outstanding leadership for children, youth and families.**

## Wriggelsworth

*continued from page MI 1*

chair of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN and a 2005 honoree, said Sheriff Wriggelsworth not only "was a coauthor of our preschool report entitled, *High-Quality Preschool: The Key to Crime Prevention and School Success in Michigan*," but then "drove through a blizzard to release [it]."

Kangas noted that Wriggelsworth had participated in a panel discussion and met with multiple legislators and the Governor's staff to convey the

benefits of and the need for investments in high quality preschool.

"Due to his dedication and commitment, and with the support of our 400 members statewide, this year we saw more than \$15 million in new state funding for early childhood education and care programs," Kangas said.

Wriggelsworth said he was humbled to receive this award. "We've got to get at the problem of crime from the front end," he said. "That's where we can make a real difference in these young people's lives, and that's why I'm a member of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS."



*Hundreds of Police Chiefs, Sheriffs,  
Prosecutors, other Law Enforcement  
Leaders, and Violence Survivors  
Preventing Crime and Violence*

**Co-Chairs**  
**Wayne Kangas**  
Sheriff,  
Clinton County  
**Brian Mackie**  
Prosecutor,  
Washtenaw County  
**Dr. Joseph E. Thomas, Jr.**  
Police Chief,  
Southfield  
**Eric King**  
Police Chief (Retired)  
Mt. Morris Township

## **From Michigan's Front Line Against Crime: A School and Youth Violence Prevention Plan**

As a statewide organization of more than 400 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, other law enforcement leaders, and violence survivors, we are determined to see that dangerous criminals are put behind bars. But anyone who thinks that jailing a criminal undoes the agony of crime has not seen crime up close.

Michigan's anti-crime arsenal contains no weapons more powerful than the research-based programs that help kids get the right start in life—programs like Head Start, pre-kindergarten and educational child care, child abuse and neglect prevention, youth development activities for the after-school and summer hours, and intervention programs proven to help troubled kids.

Yet today, inadequate funding for these critical crime-prevention investments leaves thousands of children at needless risk of becoming violent or delinquent teens and adult criminals—and leaves every Michiganiaan at risk of becoming a crime victim. In 2005, 55,877 violent crimes were reported to Michigan police departments, an average of 153 per day.

### **State Law Enforcement organizations support this plan:**

- ✓ **Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police**
- ✓ **Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan**
- ✓ **Michigan Sheriffs' Association**

Dozens of national and other state law enforcement and victim assistance organizations across the country have adopted similar resolutions supporting the components of the FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS School and Youth Violence Prevention Plan.

**We call on Michigan's federal, state and local officials to implement a four-part plan to dramatically reduce crime and violence, and help Michigan's young people learn the skills and values they need to become good neighbors and responsible adults. While no plan can prevent every violent act, this common-sense approach—based on our experience and the latest research about what really works to fight crime—can make all of us safer and save tax dollars.**

### **Four Actions to Dramatically Reduce School and Youth Violence**

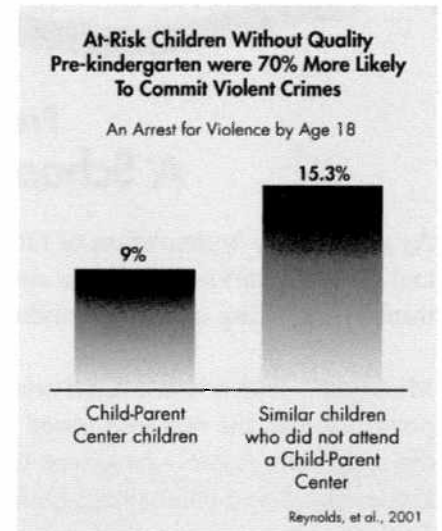
- **Provide all families access to quality preschool and educational child care programs proven to reduce crime.**
- **Help at-risk parents improve their parenting and prevent child abuse and neglect by offering in-home parenting coaching. Make sure child protective services have policies and resources sufficient to protect and heal abused and neglected children.**
- **Provide all school-age children and teens access to after-school youth development programs to shut down the "Prime Time for Juvenile Crime."**
- **Identify troubled children and teens as early as possible, intervene and provide them and their parents with the training and counseling necessary to help them avoid crime.**

## 1. Provide all families access to quality preschool and educational child care programs proven to reduce crime.

Law enforcement leaders have long known that intervening early in children's lives is the best way to prevent violence and crime. Rigorous social science and neuroscience studies now provide evidence that supports what many have known from experience: in the first few years of life, children's intellect and emotions, and even their ability to feel concern for others (a prerequisite to conscience) are being permanently shaped. When parents are at work trying to make ends meet, high quality programs for children, age birth to 5, can not only prepare them to succeed in school but also reduce later crime. For example:

- Chicago's publicly-funded Child-Parent Centers have served almost 100,000 3- and 4-year-olds since 1967. Researchers tracked 989 of those children and 550 similar children not in the program for 14 years. The children who did not participate were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18. This program also cut child abuse and neglect (see Section 2).
- In Ypsilanti, Michigan, 3- and 4-year-olds from low-income families who were randomly assigned to a group that did not receive preschool were five times more likely to have become chronic lawbreakers by age 27 than those who were assigned to the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation's Perry Preschool program.

More than 66 percent of Michigan's more than 749,000 children under age 6 have both parents or their only single parent in the workforce. Currently, Michigan only marginally funds pre-kindergarten programs leaving a large unmet need. When parents are forced to leave their children in inadequate educational child care, we all pay a terrible price.



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***"We need to help give at-risk kids the right start so that they're ready to learn when they get to school and less likely to take the path toward crime and violence. Quality child care and school readiness programs are proven to give children that opportunity."***

**– Sheriff Gene Wriggelsworth,**  
Ingham County

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## 2. Help at-risk parents improve their parenting and prevent child abuse and neglect by offering in-home parenting coaching. Make sure child protective services have policies and resources sufficient to protect and heal abused and neglected children.

In 2004, more than 29,805 children were abused or neglected in Michigan. Studies show that being abused or neglected multiplies the risk that a child will grow up to be violent. It is imperative to expand parenting-coaching and family support programs that prevent children from being abused and neglected, reduce subsequent delinquency, and improve other outcomes for children. Research has proven the success of these programs:

- Michigan's "0-3 Secondary Prevention Initiative," which provides services such as home visits and parent coaching, has significantly reduced child abuse referrals.
- The Nurse-Family Partnership randomly assigned half of a group of at-risk families to receive visits by specially-trained nurses who provided coaching in parenting skills and other advice and support. Beginning during the mother's pregnancy and continuing until the child's second birthday, parents learned to manage stress, understand the health and nutrition needs of newborns, identify the signs of problems, make their home safe, and find resources such as doctors and other child care help. Rigorous research originally published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* showed the program could prevent as many as half of all cases of abuse or neglect among at-risk families. By the time the children of the mothers in the program were age 15, they had 59 percent fewer arrests than the children of mothers left out of the program.
- Chicago's Child-Parent Centers preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds from poor neighborhoods includes a strong parental involvement requirement. Children who participated in the preschool program and similar children who did not participate were tracked by researchers until age 18. The study found that abuse and neglect of children in the program was cut in half.

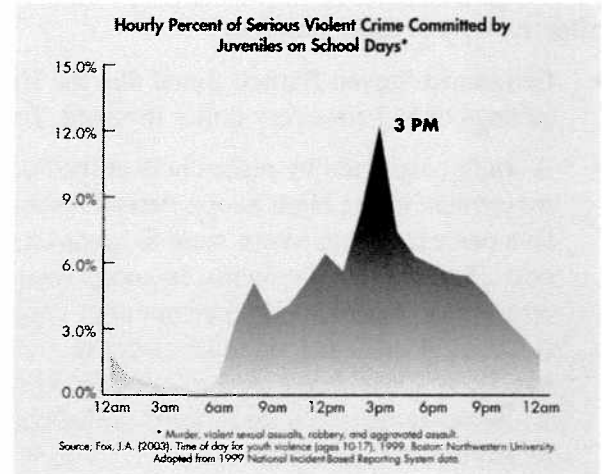


There must be a national and statewide commitment to provide child protective, foster care and adoption services with comprehensive policies, resources, and enough well-trained staff to protect and heal children who have been abused and neglected.

### **3. Provide all school-age children and teens access to after-school youth development programs to shut down the “Prime Time for Juvenile Crime.”**

In the hours after the school bell rings—when thousands of children and teens hit the streets with neither constructive activities nor adult supervision—violent juvenile crime soars and the prime time for juvenile crime begins. On school days, the peak hours for juvenile crime are from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. These are also the hours when kids are most likely to become victims of crime. Being unsupervised after school doubles the risk that 8th-graders will smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs.

Quality youth development programs in the after-school hours can cut crime immediately and transform this prime time for juvenile crime into hours of academic enrichment, wholesome fun and community service. They protect both kids and adults from becoming victims of crime, and cut smoking and drug use, while helping youngsters develop the respect, discipline and skills they need to become contributing citizens. For example:



- Five housing projects without Boys & Girls Clubs were compared to five receiving new clubs. At the beginning, drug activity and vandalism were the same. But by the time the study ended, the housing projects without the programs had 50 percent more vandalism and scored 37 percent worse on drug activity. The study was conducted in several U.S. cities.
- Among kids with prior histories of arrest, those who did not participate in San Francisco’s Bayview Safe Haven after-school program were twice as likely to be arrested during the six-month initial “intervention” period as program participants. Among kids with no prior histories or arrest, those who did not participate were three times more likely to be arrested during that same intervention period.
- Young people who were randomly assigned to a Big Brother or Big Sister were about half as likely to begin illegal drug use and nearly one third less likely to hit someone compared to those who were assigned to a waiting list.

### **4. Identify troubled children and teens as early as possible, intervene and provide them and their parents with the training and counseling necessary to help them avoid crime.**

Children who are overly aggressive are at risk for problems later in life. Early screening and intervention through social skills training, counseling or other help for children and their families can get kids back on track.

- The Incredible Years program provides training in problem solving and social issues for families of children age 2 to 8 with overly aggressive behavior problems. Researchers report that it has been able to stop the cycle of aggression for approximately two-thirds of the families receiving help.
- A study found that 40 percent of school bullies had three or more criminal convictions as adults. Tested anti bullying programs, such as the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, cut bullying by as much as half.

Many youths who are already involved in crime can become productive citizens with the right help.

- Three intensive family intervention programs that provide the parents or foster parents of violent juvenile offenders with effective tools to better control the children’s behavior have been proven to cut crime. Research shows that repeat arrests of youths in Functional Family Therapy, Multisystemic Therapy and Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care have been cut by as much as half compared to the re-arrest rate of youths not receiving this help.

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***“Investing now in our most vulnerable children is the best way to prevent crime. It helps put kids on the right track and makes everyone safer.”***

**– Denise Smith,** former probation officer and crime survivor, Detroit

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- Another approach, known as Cognitive Behavior Therapy, helps serious juvenile offenders learn and use social skills to avoid re-offending. Research studies show CBT reduces re-arrests among troubled youths by one-third to two-thirds compared to those not receiving the services.

## **The Bottom Line: Investing in Kids Saves Lives and Money**

When Michigan fails to invest in children, all Michigan citizens pay far more later—not just in lost lives, but also in tax dollars. The Michigan Treasury will actually have more money to dedicate to other uses in the future by investing today in programs to help kids get the right start in life. Research clearly demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of these programs:

- Economist Steven Barnett found that the High/Scope Foundation's Perry Preschool program produced a net savings of \$17 for every dollar invested. Total savings were \$259,000 per child, \$172,000 of it in crime costs.
- A study conducted by researchers at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis showed that the return on investment in the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program was 16 percent after adjusting for inflation. Seventy-five percent of that return went to taxpayers in the form of decreased special education expenditures, crime costs, and welfare payments. In comparison, the long-term return on U.S. stocks is 7 percent after adjusting for inflation. Thus, an initial investment of \$1,000 in a program like Perry Preschool would return over \$19,000 in 20 years while the same initial investment in the stock market would return less than \$4,000.
- Professor Mark A. Cohen of Vanderbilt University estimated that for each high-risk youth prevented from adopting a life of crime, the country saves \$1.7 million.

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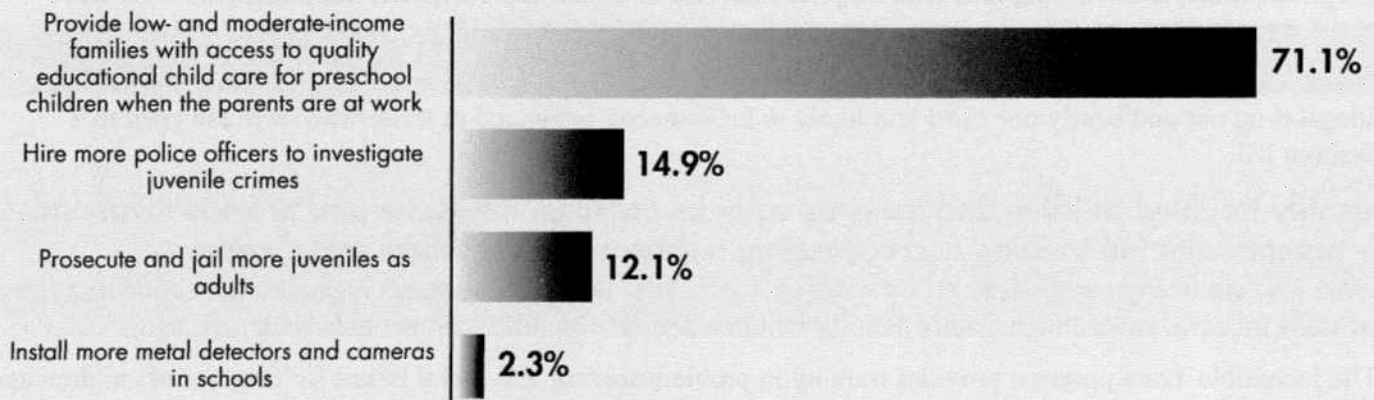
***"The time to divert people from a life of crime is when they're children. By the time they are adults, the greatest opportunity is lost."***

– **Prosecutor David Gorcyca,**  
Oakland County

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### **Law Enforcement Leaders Choose Investments in Kids as Best Strategy to Reduce Crime**

Which strategy would have the greatest impact in reducing youth violence and crime?\*



\*Many respondents favored adopting more than one strategy, and a majority ranked hiring more police officers as the second most effective strategy.

Mason-Dixon Polling and Research, 2002

For citations of studies referred to above visit [www.fightcrime.org](http://www.fightcrime.org)



Launched in 2001, FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN is a bipartisan, anti-crime organization led by more than 400 police chiefs, prosecutors, sheriffs, other law enforcement leaders and violence survivors. It is supported by tax-deductible contributions from foundations, individuals, and corporations, and receives no funds from federal, state, or local governments. It is a project of the Washington, D.C.-based FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, a national, non-profit organization led by more than 3,000 police chiefs, prosecutors, sheriffs, other law enforcement leaders and violence survivors. Major funding is provided by the Joyce Foundation, The Skillman Foundation, and The Frey Foundation.

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January 2007



# Quality Pre-Kindergarten: Key to Crime Prevention and School Success

## A Research Brief by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS is a national anti-crime organization of over 2,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and victims of violence.

### Summary

No one cares more about putting dangerous criminals behind bars than the 2,000 law enforcement leaders and victims of violence who make up FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS. But law enforcement leaders know from experience that intervening early in a child's life is the best way to prevent crime. Research shows that quality pre-kindergarten cuts crime and leads to higher rates of high school graduation. Tragically, inadequate funding denies thousands of eligible children access to these programs.

### Quality Pre-Kindergarten Cuts Crime

Research has repeatedly shown that quality pre-kindergarten, especially for at-risk children, cuts later crime. For example:

- Michigan's High/Scope Perry Preschool program served three- and four-year-old children from low-income families. Children who were not in the program were five times more likely to become chronic lawbreakers as adults than those who were in the program.
- Chicago's federally-funded Child-Parent Centers have served 100,000 three- and four-year-olds from low-income neighborhoods since 1967. Research shows that at-risk children who did not attend the program were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18 than similar kids who did attend the program.

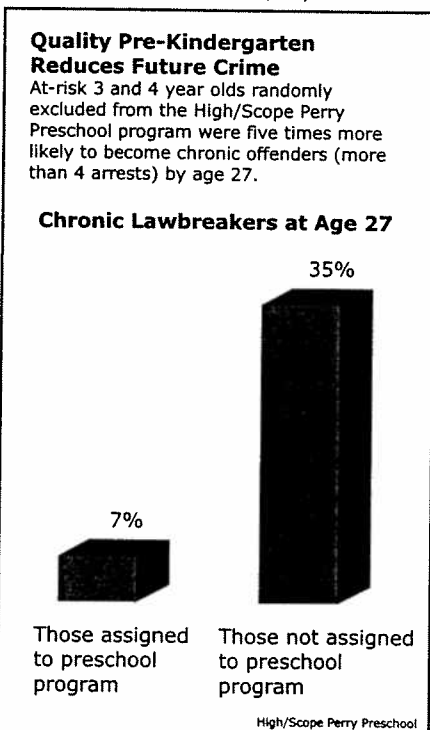
Most at-risk kids, even with

poor pre-kindergarten, become contributing adults. Nevertheless, failing to assure access to quality pre-kindergarten programs multiplies the risk that these children will become involved in crime and violence and decreases the likelihood that they will ever achieve their full potential.

### Quality Pre-Kindergarten Programs Help Children Succeed

Quality pre-kindergarten also produces extraordinary academic and economic benefits. For example:

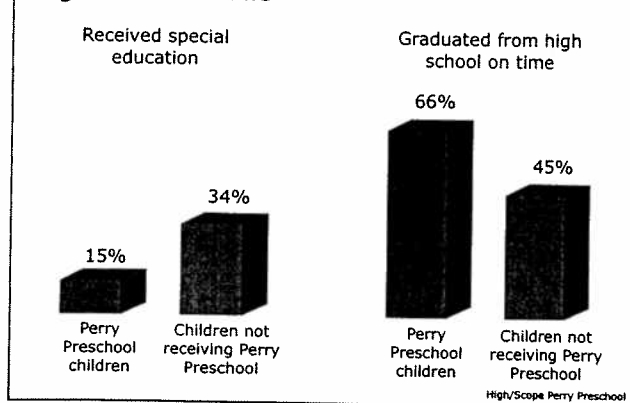
- Compared to children who attended the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program, children who were not enrolled were twice as likely to be placed in special education classes and were a third less likely to graduate from high school on time. In contrast, children in the program were four times more likely to have yearly earnings of \$24,000 or more.



- Compared to children who attended the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, children not in the program were 67 percent more likely to have been retained a grade in school and 71 percent more likely to be placed in special education classes.

- Compared to children not enrolled in the Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention program, children enrolled in the program were half as likely to be assigned to special education classes, 43 percent less likely to be held back a grade in school, and nearly three times as likely to have attended a four-year college.

**At-Risk Children Not Attending High/Scope Perry Preschool Were Twice as Likely to Need Special Education and a Third Less Likely to Graduate From High School on Time**



## Parents Need Help Paying for Pre-Kindergarten

Many parents cannot afford to pay for quality pre-kindergarten any more than they could pay private school tuition if public schools closed. One year of quality pre-kindergarten costs \$5,000-\$7,000—more than the average cost of public college tuition in the United States. Pre-kindergarten for two children costs \$10,000-\$14,000 annually—more than the income of a full-time, minimum-wage worker.

## Need for Quality Pre-K is Enormous

The federally-funded Head Start program for children in poverty is so under-funded that it can serve only six out of ten eligible three- and four-year-olds, and can serve most of them for only part of the time parents are working.

The federally-funded Child Care and Development Block Grant, which helps low-income parents pay for early education, can serve only one out of seven eligible children, and provides funds too meager for parents to purchase quality care.

Some state initiatives, like Georgia's universal pre-kindergarten program and North Carolina's Smart Start, are making major contributions. But no

state comes close to meeting the needs of low- and moderate-income working families for quality pre-kindergarten.

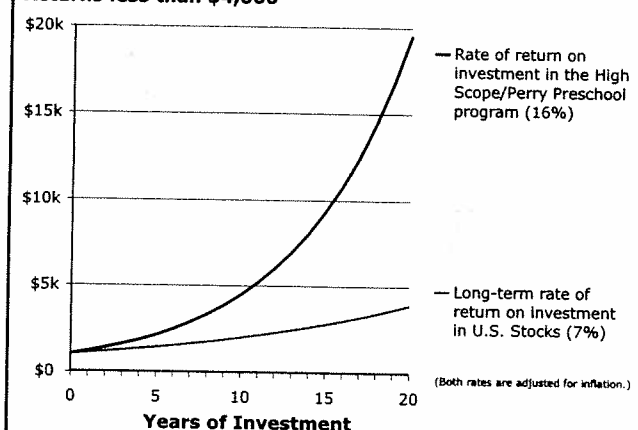
## Quality Pre-Kindergarten Saves Money

The High/Scope Perry Preschool program cuts crime, welfare, and other costs so much that it saves more than \$7—including more than \$6 in crime savings—for every \$1 invested. An analysis by Arthur Rolnick of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis shows that the program's annual return on investment is 16 percent after adjusting for inflation. Seventy-five percent of that return goes to taxpayers in the form of decreased special education expenditures, crime costs, and welfare payments. In comparison, the long-term average annual return on U.S. stocks is 7 percent. Thus, an initial investment of \$1,000 in a program like the Perry Preschool will return over \$19,000 in 20 years, while the same initial investment in the stock market will return less than \$4,000. Failing to invest in quality pre-kindergarten programs squanders billions.

## Law Enforcement is United

Law enforcement leaders and researchers agree: It is time to invest in what works to help to prevent crime and produce successful schools.

**A \$1,000 Investment in Quality Pre-kindergarten Returns over \$19,000 in 20 Years while a Stock Market Investment Returns less than \$4,000**



**FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS** is supported by tax-deductible contributions from foundations, individuals, and corporations. It receives no government funds. Major funders include: Naomi and Nehemiah Cohen Foundation, Freddie Mac Foundation, Carl M. Freeman Foundation, Garfield Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, The Pew Charitable Trusts - Advancing Quality Pre-Kindergarten for All, and others.

Source citation and other research are available at [www.fightcrime.org](http://www.fightcrime.org)  
 Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2000 P St., NW, Ste 240, Washington D.C., 20036, 202-776-0027.



# High-Quality Preschool: The Key to Crime Prevention and School Success in Michigan

A Report from FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS *MICHIGAN*

**Ella M. Bully-Cummings**

Chief of Police, Detroit Police Department

**David G. Gorcyca**

Oakland County Prosecutor

**Gene L. Wriggelsworth**

Ingham County Sheriff

**Lawrence J. Schweinhart, Ph.D.**

President, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation

**Kathy G. Pelleran**

State Director, FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS *MICHIGAN*


## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS *MICHIGAN* (330 members) is part of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, a national, bipartisan, nonprofit anti-crime organization. The national organization is led by more than 2,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors and victims of violence. The members take a hard-nosed look at what works—and what doesn't work—to prevent crime and violence. They then recommend effective strategies to state and national policymakers.

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS is supported by tax-deductible contributions from foundations, individuals, and corporations. FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS receives no funds from federal, state or local governments.

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## FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN

Dear Policy-Makers and Community Leaders:

No one cares more about putting dangerous criminals behind bars than the more than 2,000 law enforcement leaders and victims of violence who are members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, including 330 members in Michigan. But law enforcement leaders know from experience that intervening early in a child's life is the best way to prevent crime. When children don't get the right start in life, we're all at risk.

There is no longer any doubt about the value of high-quality preschool programs. Recent long-term studies show that at-risk children who attend high-quality preschool and educational child care programs are far less likely to become criminals than those denied access to such programs.

Poor quality early care multiplies the risk that children will grow up to become criminals and threatens the safety of all Michiganders. Children from low-income families are most at risk of becoming involved in crime without high-quality programs. Unfortunately, low-income families have the most trouble obtaining high-quality care, and are the families whose children would benefit the most from it.

Today, 78 percent of 3-year-olds and 35 percent of 4-year-olds eligible for state and/or federal preschool do not receive publicly funded preschool services due to a lack of funding. With tuition at private preschool programs exceeding the cost of tuition at a public university, the shortage of government supported programs forces many low- and moderate-income working families to resort to child care that often amounts to little more than child storage. Though the state has taken a crucial first step in meeting the need by implementing the Michigan School Readiness Program for its 4-year-olds, many children will remain unserved if state and federal funding are not increased.

Research here in Michigan and elsewhere shows that it is possible to give all kids a fair shot at success in school and in life. An investment in high-quality preschool now will save taxpayers money in future crime costs.

That is why the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, the Michigan Sheriffs' Association, and the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan are united in calling on policy-makers to guarantee all families access to high-quality preschool programs.

Sincerely,

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN CO-CHAIRS

Wayne Kangas  
Sheriff  
Clinton County

Brian Mackie  
Prosecutor  
Washtenaw County

Dr. Joseph E. Thomas, Jr.  
Police Chief  
Southfield

Eric King  
Former Police Chief  
Mt. Morris Township

## **Executive Summary**

### Research Shows Benefits of High-Quality Preschool Programs

- Children from low-income families were randomly assigned at ages 3 and 4 to participate in the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program in Ypsilanti, MI. Those left out of the program were five times more likely to become chronic offenders with five or more arrests by age 27 than those who participated in the program.
- By age 40, children left out of the Perry Preschool Program were four times more likely to be arrested for drug felonies, more than twice as likely to become “career offenders” with more than 10 arrests, and almost seven times as likely to have been arrested for possession of dangerous drugs than those who participated in the program.
- Compared to children who attended the Perry Preschool Program, children who did not attend were twice as likely to be placed in special education classes and were a third less likely to graduate from high school on time.

### Michigan Children Without Preschool at a Disadvantage

- Altogether, Head Start and special education funds serve 18,058 three-year-olds, and the Michigan School Readiness Program, Head Start, and special education funds serve 52,592 four-year-olds. Due to a lack of funding, 78 percent of 3-year-olds and 35 percent of 4-year-olds eligible for state and/or federal preschool programs are left without access to preschool.
- Without public assistance, tuition for a preschool or early learning program costs about \$5,700 annually. This is more than the average annual tuition at a public university in Michigan. Preschool for two children costs more than the income of a full-time minimum-wage worker in Michigan.
- High-quality preschool is essential in Michigan, where 44,000 juveniles are arrested every year.

### High-Quality Preschool Saves Money

- The Perry Preschool Program cut crime, welfare, and other costs so much that it saved taxpayers more than \$17 for every \$1 invested (including more than \$11 in crime savings).
- According to an evaluation of the Michigan School Readiness Program, students who participate in the program are less likely to repeat a grade. This results in an annual savings to Michigan of approximately \$11 million.

The federal and state governments should increase funding so all children have access to high-quality preschool programs. Anything less compromises the future of Michigan’s young children and threatens the public safety for all. The Michigan members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS call on elected leaders to provide all children with affordable access to high-quality preschool.



# High-Quality Preschool: The Key to Crime Prevention and School Success in Michigan

## High-Quality Preschool Cuts Crime

The members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN are determined to put dangerous criminals behind bars. But those on the front lines know that locking up criminals is not enough to win the fight against crime. Law enforcement leaders recognize that among the most powerful weapons to prevent crime and violence are preschool programs that help kids get the right start in life.

According to a national survey of law enforcement leaders, 71 percent of police chiefs, sheriffs, and prosecuting attorneys chose providing more educational programs for young children and after-school programs for school-age children as the most effective strategies for reducing youth violence and crime.<sup>1</sup>

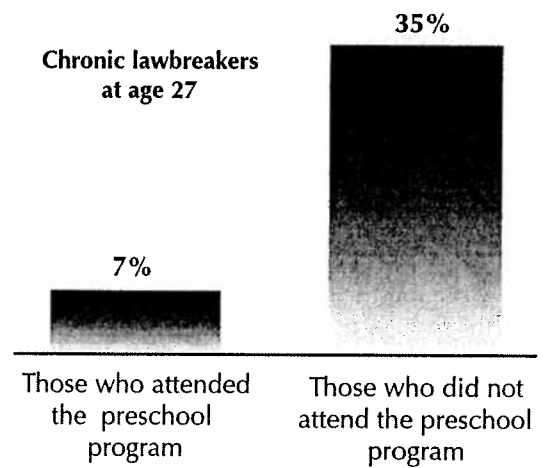
Research backs up what law enforcement professionals have learned from experience. Studies show that at-risk kids who attend high-quality preschool programs are less likely to commit crimes as adults than similar children who do not attend preschool. Consider the evidence:

**High/Scope Perry Preschool Program:** The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation initiated a study of the Perry Preschool Program in Ypsilanti, MI in 1962. The Perry Preschool Program is a high quality, one- to two-year long educational program with a home visiting component that is considered

the model of early childhood educational programs. In November 2004, the Foundation released the most recent findings of lifetime effects of the Perry Preschool Program. By age 27, those left out of the program were five times more likely to become chronic offenders with five or more arrests than those who participated in the program. By age 40, the children who did not attend the Perry Preschool Program were more than twice as likely to become "career criminals" with more

## Quality Preschool Cuts Future Crime

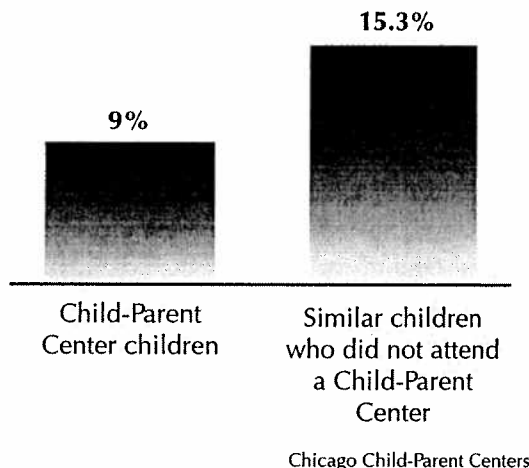
At-risk 3 & 4 year olds randomly excluded from the High/Scope Perry Preschool program were five times more likely to become chronic offenders (5 or more arrests) by age 27.



High/Scope Perry Preschool

**At-Risk Children Without Quality  
Preschool were 70% More Likely to  
Commit Violent Crimes**

An Arrest for Violence by Age 18



than 10 arrests, and twice as likely to be arrested for violent crimes than those who participated in the program. Those who did not attend the Perry Preschool Program were also four times more likely to be arrested for drug felonies, more likely to abuse illegal drugs, and seven times more likely to be arrested for possession of dangerous drugs than those who participated in the program.<sup>2</sup>

**Chicago Child-Parent Centers:** Chicago's federally-funded Child-Parent Centers have served 100,000 3- and 4-year-olds since 1967. The program is a center-based early intervention program that provides educational and family-support services to economically disadvantaged children. A study comparing 989 children in the Child-Parent Center to 550 similar children who were not in the program showed that children who did not participate in the program were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18.<sup>3</sup> This program will have prevented an estimated 33,000 crimes by the time the children who have attended the program reach the age of 18.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the Chicago Child-Parent Centers cut the abuse and neglect of children in the program in half.<sup>5</sup> The reduction of abuse

and neglect is significant in itself, but also because of the potential impact on future criminal behavior. Studies show that children who were abused or neglected are more likely to be arrested as juveniles and to commit crimes as adults than children who were not abused or neglected.<sup>6</sup>

**The Syracuse University Family Development Program:** Syracuse University developed a program that provides weekly home visitation and high-quality early learning programs to low-income, single-parent families beginning prenatally through age 5. Ten years after the initial study ended, children who were not included in the program were 10 times more likely to have committed a crime than comparable children enrolled in the program (16.7 percent versus 1.5 percent). Furthermore, children not in the program committed more serious crimes, including sexual abuse, robbery, and assault.<sup>7</sup>

**North Carolina's Smart Start:** North Carolina's Smart Start is a nationally-recognized initiative designed, not only to help working parents pay for early child care, but also to improve the quality of care through measures such as educational opportunities for teachers and providing resources and educational materials. Low-income children who were not enrolled in early childhood education centers with North Carolina's Smart Start quality improvement assistance demonstrated significantly more behavioral problems than children who attended centers with the Smart Start services. Specifically, children not enrolled were twice as likely to have behavior problems such as aggressive acts and poor temper control, anxiety, and hyperactivity in kindergarten.<sup>8</sup> This is important because research shows that 60 percent of children with high levels of disruptive, aggressive behaviors in early childhood will manifest high levels of antisocial and delinquent behavior later in life.<sup>9</sup>

**Head Start:** Head Start is the federally-funded national program for low-income families that provides early education services

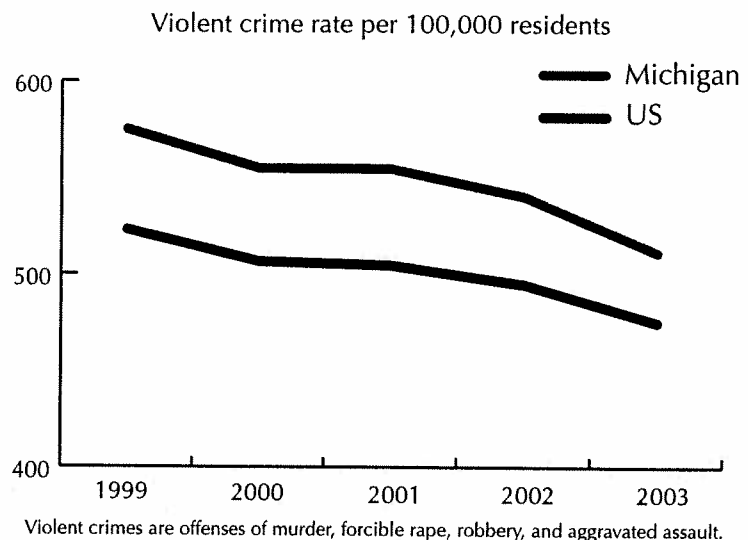
for children ages 3 to 5. Research shows that adults who graduated from Head Start have lower crime rates than adults from similar backgrounds who did not attend Head Start. A large national survey of Head Start graduates found that African-American graduates were 12 percentage points less likely to be later arrested or charged with a crime than their siblings who did not attend Head Start.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, a Florida study found that girls who had not attended Head Start were three times more likely to be arrested by age 22 than comparable girls who had participated in Head Start (15 percent vs. 5 percent).<sup>11</sup>

The research is clear: preschool programs reduce crime. This is especially important in Michigan where 44,000 juveniles are arrested every year.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, according to reports from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Michigan has had a higher crime rate (per 100,000 residents) than the U.S. crime rate in the categories of violent crime, murder, rape, and aggravated assault for every year from 1999 to 2003.<sup>13</sup> During those years, Michigan's violent crime rate was between 8 percent and 10 percent higher than the national violent crime rate, and between 1999 and 2002 Michigan's murder rate was on average 21.5 percent higher than the national rate. Michigan's murder rate was 7 percent higher than the national murder rate in 2003.<sup>14</sup>

### High-Quality Preschool Programs Help Children Succeed

In addition to crime prevention, high-quality preschool programs also lead to better educational performance. Every day, kindergarten teachers witness the difference between children who received high-quality preschool and those who did not. Children who have access to preschool programs are simply better prepared to succeed in school

### Violent Crime Rates Higher in Michigan than in US



Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004

than those who do not have access to such programs. When asked about children's readiness skills, kindergarten teachers in a recent Connecticut study reported that children with two years of pre-kindergarten were twice as likely to be ready for school in language, literacy, and math skills.<sup>15</sup> In a recent national poll of kindergarten teachers, more than nine out of 10 teachers agreed that substantially more children would succeed in school if all families had access to quality preschool programs. Furthermore, 86 percent of the teachers said poorly prepared students in the classroom negatively affect the progress of all children, even the best prepared.<sup>16</sup>

Decades of research also confirm that high-quality preschool programs help children succeed. For example, the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation found that compared to children who did not attend the Perry Preschool Program, by age 40, those who did attend the program were 31 percent more likely to graduate from high school.<sup>17</sup> Children who were not enrolled in the Perry Preschool Program were also twice as likely to be placed in special education classes and were a third less likely to graduate from high school on time

than those who attended the program.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, in the Chicago Child-Parent Center program, children who attended the program were 23 percent more likely to graduate from high school than those who did not attend. In contrast, children who were not in the Chicago Child-Parent Center program were 67 percent more likely to be held back a grade in school and 71 percent more likely to be placed in special education classes than those who attended the program.<sup>19</sup>

Research also shows that high-quality preschool programs have positive effects on the level of children's school readiness, and can level the playing field by preventing disadvantaged children from lagging behind more advantaged children in kindergarten and later school years. In a recent study in Oklahoma, for example, children's overall test scores increased by 16 percent after participating in the preschool program for one year. The most impressive gains were seen in Hispanic students, averaging a 54 percent increase in test scores. Researchers also found significant gains in children from low-income families, including a 31 percent increase in general knowledge and an 18 percent increase in language skills.<sup>20</sup>

In a 2004 study, Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) found comparable results. Tracking the progress of more than 2,300 kindergarteners, researchers found students who attended pre-kindergarten programs were better prepared to learn. The pre-kindergarten experience helped bridge the achievement gap between disadvantaged and advantaged students. In language skills, for example, Hispanic children from low-income families who attended pre-kindergarten narrowed the achievement gap separating them from white children by a third of a grade level.<sup>21</sup>

Research with a nationally representative sample of 2,800 Head Start children showed that the program significantly raised the performance scores of all children in the program, with the largest gains made by the lower-performing children, especially in the

areas of vocabulary and early writing. The program thereby narrowed the school readiness gap between children from low-income homes who attended Head Start and children from high-income homes.<sup>22</sup>

Boosting academic success is imperative in Michigan. The results from the 2003 National Assessment of Educational Progress (known as the Nation's Report Card), the only nationally representative academic assessment of America's students, showed that children in Michigan lag behind in math and reading. In 2003, 36 percent of Michigan's fourth-graders scored below the basic reading level, and 23 percent scored below the basic math level.<sup>23</sup>

### High-Quality Preschool Programs Counter Poverty Risks

The stimulating environments of high-quality preschool programs can help offset the negative effects of poverty.<sup>24</sup> This is especially important in Michigan, where 14 percent of children live below the poverty line.<sup>25</sup> The families of 363,407 Michigan children under 18 struggle to pay for basic food, clothing, health care, and early childhood care.<sup>26</sup>

The consequences of childhood poverty can be long-term, and can impact entire communities. For example, research has established a strong link between poverty and crime.<sup>27</sup> In addition to an increased risk of committing crime, poor children are also at greater risk for:

- Raising their own children in poverty
- Cognitive and developmental delays
- Dropping out of high school
- Teen pregnancies and parenthood
- Emotional and behavioral problems
- Exposure to family violence
- Working a low-wage job as an adult
- Serious and chronic health problems<sup>28</sup>

Years of research have also shown a direct

link between family income level and children's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. The early years of life are crucial to a child's brain development. The National Research Council has found that 90 percent of brain development occurs before the age of 5.<sup>29</sup> This is the time of the most rapid growth in conceptual, linguistic, and social abilities – if children have access to nurturing and enriched environments. Early education for low-income children during these vulnerable years lays a strong foundation for lifelong learning and their development into productive, healthy adults.<sup>30</sup>

### Research Shows Only High-Quality Preschool Leads to Positive Outcomes

Preschool programs can provide young children with essential academic and social skills that are critical for later success. But study after study show that such preschool programs must be of high quality to have a real impact on children, especially high-risk children.<sup>31</sup>

To quote Education Week's *Quality Counts*:

Young children exposed to high-quality settings exhibit better language and mathematics skills, better cognitive and social skills, and better relationships with classmates than do children in lower quality care.<sup>32</sup>

Researchers agree that high-quality programs share several common characteristics, including:

- Highly qualified teachers with appropriate compensation<sup>33</sup>
- Comprehensive and age-appropriate curricula<sup>34</sup>
- Strong parent involvement<sup>35</sup>
- Ratios of no more than 10 children per staff member<sup>36</sup>
- Class sizes of no more than 20 children<sup>37</sup>
- Screening and referral services<sup>38</sup>

### Preschool in Michigan: Building Blocks of Success

The Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP), started as a pilot program in 1985, serves at-risk 4-year-olds. A minimum of 50 percent of the children in the program must meet the income eligibility criteria (having a family income below 185 percent of the federal poverty level), as well as at least one other risk factor from a list of 25 possible factors.<sup>39</sup> Children who do not meet the income eligibility criteria must exhibit at least two of the 25 risk factors, such as single parent household, teenage parent, or presence of abuse and neglect.<sup>40</sup> MSRP aims to provide preschool for the 4-year-olds who are not eligible for, or not being served by, Head Start.

Michigan has taken some key first steps in setting high-quality standards for its School Readiness Program. For instance, the Michigan Department of Education requires:

- A four-year bachelor's degree for lead teachers in public school districts, and either a bachelor's degree or an associate's degree with a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential for lead teachers in non-public school centers
- A two-year associate's degree or CDA for assistant teachers
- A teacher-student ratio that does not exceed one to eight<sup>41</sup>

A rigorous study by Lawrence Schweinhart and Zongping Xiang tested the effectiveness of the Michigan School Readiness Program. The study compared 338 at-risk children who attended the program and 258 similar children who did not attend the program, and followed them from kindergarten to age 10. The findings show that MSRP has a positive and lasting impact on children's achievement. At the time the children entered kindergarten, those who attended MSRP scored significantly higher in overall development than those who did not attend the program. Furthermore, from kindergarten through fourth grade, children in

the program were rated significantly higher in school readiness by their teachers, were 35 percent less likely to be held back a grade in school, and scored 16 percent better on the mathematics section and 24 percent better on the literacy section of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program.<sup>42</sup>

The Michigan School Readiness Program generally follows high-quality standards.<sup>43</sup> However, two areas of Michigan's early childhood education program remain weak: comprehensive screening and referral requirements and compensation for preschool teachers.

The Michigan School Readiness Program must make referrals, but regular screening for vision, hearing, and health is not required prior to preschool. Early screening should be one of Michigan's top priorities, as approximately 15 to 18 percent of children have or will develop behavior disabilities.<sup>44</sup> Early screening of hearing, vision, and other possible developmental or physical impediments to learning should be included in any high-quality preschool program. The American Academy of Pediatrics stresses the need for early screening in order to identify children who may need specific interventions.<sup>45</sup> Studies show that the earlier the screening occurs, the greater the likelihood of preventing potential developmental delay.<sup>46</sup> Early intervention is especially important because young children with developmental or behavior disabilities are more likely to engage in later delinquency.<sup>47</sup>

Teacher wages are also crucial to high-quality preschool programs. Studies show that teacher compensation is directly linked to education quality.<sup>48</sup> Poor wages often lead to high staff turnover, which can result in poor-quality care.<sup>49</sup> Research also shows that poor care lowers academic, social, and emotional outcomes for children. Effective teaching can raise achievement levels and close the achievement gaps between disadvantaged and advantaged students.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, preschool teachers in Michigan are paid very little. The median salary for preschool teachers is just

### Quality Preschool Saves Money

Taxpayers, victims, and participants saved over \$17 for every \$1 invested in the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program.



For every \$1  
invested



Over \$17 was  
saved

\$19,900 while kindergarten teachers earn more than double that at \$40,920.<sup>51</sup>

### High-Quality Preschool Programs Save Money

According to an evaluation of the Michigan School Readiness Program, 35 percent fewer children who attended the program, than those who did not attend, needed to repeat a grade, preventing an estimated 1,700 children from being held back in school. This results in savings to Michigan of approximately \$11 million every year.<sup>52</sup>

A 2004 report from Columbia University on the cost-savings of preschool programs found similar results. Preschool returns about half of its original cost in later school-related savings. Researchers showed that an initial investment in a high-quality program led to savings in the range of \$2,951 to \$9,547 per child within 10 years of entering kindergarten. These savings came primarily from a decrease in the number of students needing special education and students held back a grade in school.<sup>53</sup>

Studies of the Perry Preschool Program and Chicago Child-Parent Center Program looked beyond just later school-related savings, incorporating the costs of crime and welfare into the cost-benefit equation. The newest



study of the Perry Preschool Program, released in November 2004, shows an even higher return to society than previously recorded. The Perry Preschool Program cut crime, welfare, and other costs so much that it saved taxpayers more than \$17 for every \$1 invested (including more than \$11 in crime savings).<sup>54</sup> Similarly, a study of the Chicago Child-Parent Centers revealed that high-quality programs delivered savings to taxpayers, victims, and participants of more than \$7 for every \$1 invested. Of course, this does not count the value of preventing pain and suffering for crime victims. For the children already served, this translates to a savings of approximately \$2.6 billion.<sup>55</sup> In other words, not only do high-quality preschool programs cut crime and produce academic and societal benefits, but denying these services to children results in significantly higher costs to Michigan's justice, educational, and social service systems.

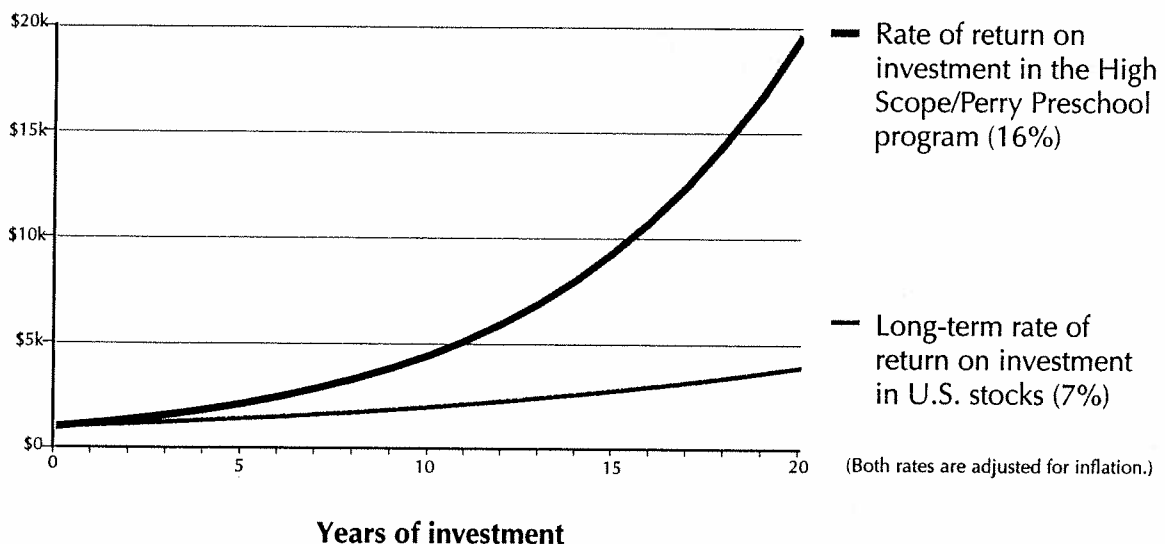
Leading economists agree that funding high-quality preschool is among the best investments government can make. An analysis by Arthur Rolnick, Senior Vice-President and Director of Research at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, showed that the return

on the investment of the Perry Preschool Program was 16 percent after adjusting for inflation. Seventy-five percent of that return went to the public in the form of decreased special education expenditures, crime costs, and welfare payments. To put this in perspective, the long-term average return on U.S. stocks is 7 percent after adjusting for inflation. Thus, an initial investment of \$1,000 in a program like the Perry Preschool is likely to return more than \$19,000 in 20 years, while the same initial investment in the stock market is likely to return less than \$4,000.<sup>56</sup> As William Gale and Isabel Sawhill of the Brookings Institution assert: investing in early childhood education provides government and society "with estimated rates of return that would make a venture capitalist envious."<sup>57</sup>

### High-Quality Preschool Unavailable to Needy Children

Michigan manages a patchwork of federal and state funds to provide early childhood education programs. Yet, due to a lack of funding, high-quality preschool programs are currently unavailable for thousands of Michigan's children — especially those most at risk.

**A \$1,000 Investment in Quality Preschool Returns over \$19,000 in 20 Years while a Stock Market Investment Returns less than \$4,000**



Rolnick & Grunewald, 2003 & Farrell, 2002

Head Start is the federally funded national program for low-income families that provides early education services for children ages 3 to 5. Unfortunately, the federal Head Start commitment of \$228 million was not enough to cover all 3- and 4-year-olds.<sup>58</sup> The Head Start program served 12,927 three-year-olds (10 percent of all 3-year-olds) and 19,174 four-year-olds (14% of all 4-year-olds) during the 2002 to 2003 program year.<sup>59</sup>

Since 1985, the Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP) has served 4-year-olds at risk of school failure. MSRP aims to provide preschool for the 4-year-olds who are not eligible for, or not being served by, Head Start, and has made great strides in increasing school readiness for thousands of children. Prior to 1985, there were no state school readiness programs that served children in Michigan. Now, state programs serve about 19 percent of all the 4-year-olds in the state.<sup>60</sup> During the 2003 to 2004 school year, the Michigan School

Readiness Program provided 25,712 four-year-olds with preschool, with a state budget of approximately \$84.85 million.<sup>61</sup> Of the children served, 22,000 were in school district programs and the balance were in non-public school settings.<sup>62</sup> MSRP serves children in 467 school districts and 65 community agency programs. It also provides direct grants to preschool centers not affiliated with public schools on a competitive basis.<sup>63</sup>

An additional 5,131 three-year-olds and 7,706 four-year-olds with special education needs were provided with federal funds to attend preschool through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act during the 2002 to 2003 program year.<sup>64</sup>

Some high poverty schools use funding from Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act to provide preschool programs, but the funds are allocated to school districts based on narrow eligibility guidelines.<sup>65</sup> Before reporting was discontinued three years ago, an estimated 5,000 at-risk children were served by school districts in Title I preschool programs.<sup>66</sup>

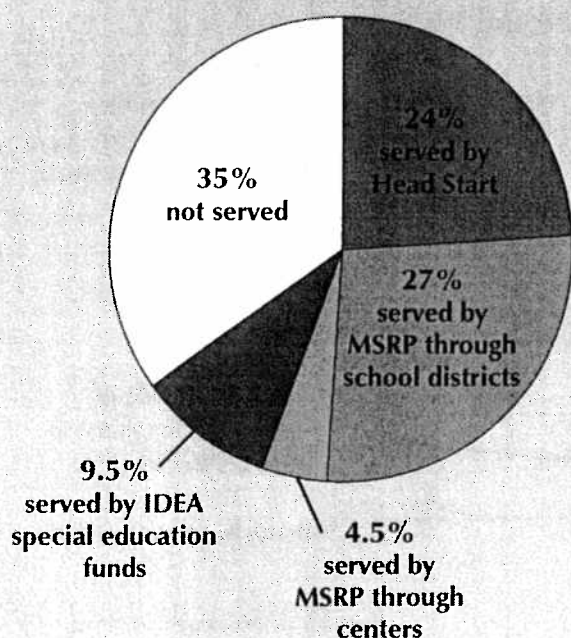
There are approximately 81,000 at-risk 4-year-olds in Michigan who are eligible for state and/or federal early education programs.<sup>67</sup> Unfortunately, the Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP), Head Start, and IDEA special education funds together only helped 65 percent of eligible at-risk 4-year-olds.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, there are approximately 81,000 at-risk 3-year-olds in Michigan who are eligible for state and/or federal early education programs.<sup>69</sup> Unfortunately, Head Start and IDEA special education funds together only helped 22 percent of eligible at-risk 3-year-olds.<sup>70</sup>

The programs serve just 39 percent of all of Michigan's 4-year-olds, and 13 percent of the state's 3-year-olds.<sup>71</sup>

Many preschools offer only half-day programs, leaving many families in need of "wrap-around" childcare services. The Michigan School Readiness Program is a minimum of 2.5 hours per day, 4 days per week, and 30 weeks

### 1 Out of 3 Eligible 4-Year-Olds Left Out Of Publicly Funded Preschool Programs

About 81,000 four-year-olds are eligible for state and/or federal early education programs



Michigan Department of Education, 2003  
National Institute for Early Education Research, 2004

per year.<sup>72</sup> This leaves children enrolled in MSRP in need of childcare services for the rest of each school day.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is a principal source of federal funding for early childhood care assistance, and is often the source of funds that help working families pay for wrap-around child care services. States are required to provide matching funds and can use these resources to help low-income families pay for early education and after-school services while the parent(s) is employed, attending educational or training programs, or looking for work.<sup>73</sup>

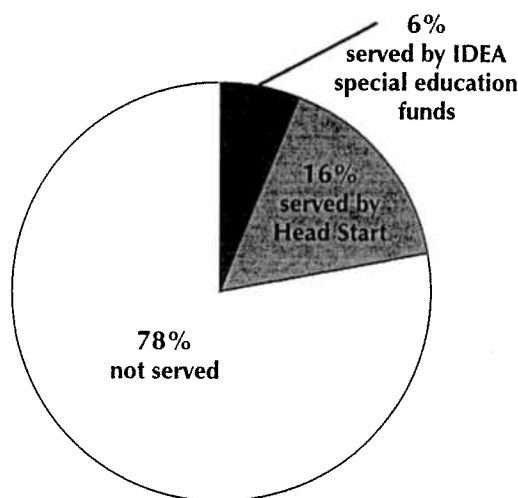
Though the system was designed to help all eligible children by providing subsidies, inadequate funding allows only a minority of children to be served. Nationally, only one in seven eligible children receive CCDBG subsidies.<sup>74</sup> Federal CCDBG funds to Michigan totaled almost \$143.1 million in 2004 and the state provided 40.8 million in matching funds. This total funding helps only approximately 50,100 Michigan children, of which approximately 6,500 are 3-year-olds and 6,500 are 4-year-olds.<sup>75</sup>

In the last few years, the state has narrowed its eligibility criteria, taking away wrap-around services for an estimated 3,000 families.<sup>76</sup> The eligibility criteria will likely tighten even more in the next fiscal year, shutting out more children from high-quality preschool programs because their parents do not have wrap-around care.<sup>77</sup>

Many parents cannot afford to pay for preschool services, and some can only afford to put their children in a care setting that is more like "child storage" than early education. One year of preschool for a 3- or 4-year-old costs an average of \$5,700 — more than the average cost of public university tuition. Preschool for two children costs more than the income of a full-time minimum-wage worker in Michigan.<sup>78</sup> Parents need help paying for high-quality preschool. If Michigan is serious about protecting the public and making a difference

### 3 Out of 4 Eligible 3-Year-Olds Left Out Of Publicly Funded Preschool Programs

About 81,000 three-year-olds are eligible for publicly funded early education programs



Michigan Department of Education, 2003  
National Institute for Early Education Research, 2004

in the lives of young children, additional state and federal funds must be allocated so that all at-risk children can receive quality preschool services.

Despite the glaring unmet need, state funding for preschool has remained stagnant for the past five years.<sup>79</sup> The long-term vision of access to preschool for all children will require a substantial commitment of additional resources before it becomes a reality in Michigan. It is estimated that an additional \$92 million in state funds would be required to serve the 28,000 remaining at-risk Michigan 4-year-olds who are eligible for state and/or federal funded preschool.<sup>80</sup> However only about 7,000 additional children would be able to take advantage of the current state program, if additional funding were available, since the remainder face access barriers.<sup>81</sup> These include a limited number of licensed teachers and facilities, half-day programs that don't accommodate parents who work and cannot

afford child care, and inadequate reimbursement to providers for actual program costs. State legislators can remedy these access problems by urging school districts to increase the number of licensed classrooms and teachers; increasing funding to \$4,000 per pupil; allowing more families to qualify by raising the income eligibility to 300 percent of the federal poverty level; restoring the full-day preschool program;<sup>82</sup> and moving toward a universal program to serve all 3- and 4-year-olds.

### Conclusion

Investing in children's early education is vital. More than 44,000 juveniles are arrested every year in Michigan.<sup>83</sup> Despite the best efforts from law enforcement, this pattern will continue unless serious measures are taken before — not after — crimes occur.

It is time to invest in what works to prevent crime. The research evidence is clear: high-quality preschool programs are crucial to reducing crime. That is why the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, the Michigan Sheriffs' Association, and the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan are calling on elected leaders to provide all children affordable access to high-quality preschool.

State and federal lawmakers know children from low-income families need high-quality preschool programs to succeed in school and in life. But, by failing to allocate sufficient funds for these high-quality preschool programs, lawmakers force thousands of families to settle for care that may be detrimental to their child's development.

Michigan must increase funding for the Michigan School Readiness Program, so that it can serve the 28,000 at-risk 4-year-olds eligible for the program who are left without access to preschool. But the state cannot shoulder the full cost of preschool on its own. Congress must also increase funding for Head Start, so it can serve more 3- and 4-year-olds in Michigan.

Thousands of Michigan's children are denied access to early learning programs due to inadequate state and federal funding and narrowed eligibility criteria. This compromises the future of young children and threatens the public's safety. Additional state and federal funds are essential to ensure that Michigan's 3- and 4-year-olds have access to high-quality preschool in order to prepare them for lifelong learning, to increase economic prosperity, and to prevent future crime. Investments in preschool are investments in the quality of life for all Michiganders.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>66</sup> L. Brown, Assistant Director, Office of School Improvement, Michigan Department of Education, (personal communication, March 26, 2004). Brown explained it is possible that these children were enrolled in MSRP classes as well, but no records were kept.
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Services, Michigan Department of Education, (personal communication, January 25, 2005)

<sup>80</sup> The additional amount needed to minimally fund the Michigan School Readiness Program was determined by multiplying the number of additional children eligible for MSRP but are not being served [(n=28,000—which was computed by subtracting the current number of 4-year-olds being served (53,000) from the total number of eligible 4-year-olds (81,000)] by the cost per child (\$3,300). For the cost per child and current number of children served, see: Michigan Department of Education, Office of School Excellence, Early Childhood and Parenting Programs. (2002). *Michigan School Readiness Program: Implementation manual*. Retrieved from [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/ImpManual\\_11363\\_7.PDF](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/ImpManual_11363_7.PDF). For the number of eligible children, see: Michigan Department of Education. (2003). *Michigan School Readiness Program community needs and resources assessment*. Lansing, MI: Author.

<sup>81</sup> E. Buch, Director, Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services, Michigan Department of Education, (personal communication, January 25, 2005). Dr. Bush explained that the programs are not full-day programs, so some parents choose not to use them and instead work different shifts or employ family members or babysitters to take care of their children. Additionally, the program requires half the applicants to meet a low-income criteria as one of the risk factors. More eligible children could be served if the income eligibility were raised to 300% of the federal poverty level. Also, school districts currently have the capacity to serve only 24,472 children through the number of licensed classrooms and teachers.

<sup>82</sup> E. Buch, Director, Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services, Michigan Department of Education, (personal communication, February 1, 2005). Dr. Bush explained that in FY 2000 and FY 2001, Michigan offered funds to MSRP and Head Start programs to “wraparound” their part-day funded programs. The programs were “forward-funded” so that the actual programs took place the following year, i.e. the 2000 to 2001 and 2001 to 2002 school years. There was a local match required that could use CCDBG funds, parent tuition, or locally raised funds. Dr. Bush believes that many children accessed the program because of the “wraparound” possibility.

<sup>83</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation. Uniform Crime Reports. 2003. *Arrests by State, 2003*. Table 69. Retrieved from: [http://www.fbi.gov/filelink.html?file=/ucr/cius\\_03/Pdf03sec4.pdf](http://www.fbi.gov/filelink.html?file=/ucr/cius_03/Pdf03sec4.pdf)



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